

and called special attention to their cheapness. "They were never made for the money, and cannot be replaced at anything like the price," she said. "They were a special purchase. You would do well to lay in a stock, for such lovely things are always useful," etc.

"I shall buy some," said Ida, "though my wardrobe drawers are overflowing. They are so ridiculously cheap. It is certain they never were made for the money."

"That is just what I object to," said Aileen. "I like the articles very much, and I am sure my mother would. But I should be miserable every time I put them on, if I were to think that they were not properly paid for. Fancy all the stitches that have gone to each, the wearing effect on the workers' sight and health, and the miserable price paid in return for time and labour—for these are made by hand. They would be too cheap if the iron seamstress had shared

in the production of them; how much too cheap under present circumstances?"

The saleswoman looked disappointed, and Ida remonstrated with her friend. "If you leave them, Aileen, nobody will be any better for your self-denial, and you cannot have more suitable and beautiful articles."

"I know that. I suppose people would think me foolish and fanciful; but I have heard so much about the weary toilers who work so unceasingly and earn so little, that I am resolved not to share the responsibility of the bargain-lovers, who never ask themselves at what cost to the poor luxuries are cheapened for the rich. I will purchase other things in your line," she added, turning to the saleswoman. The latter was glad to find that the young lady, whom she could not help admiring, was not of those who turn over large quantities of goods for mere amusement, and end by the most trifling expenditure

possible. Ida was almost angry at Aileen, and mentally ridiculed her fastidiousness, but she said nothing; only she managed to tell the saleswoman to reserve the choicest of the rejected articles for herself, and to send them to Fairview Hall on the following day.

The girls passed Susan Meade closely as they came out of Baker's, and she heard Miss Clinton say, "Did I tell you there is just a chance that my cousin, Parry Clinton, will come this way, so as to be our escort to Ilford when my visit to Fairview is over? He will write definitely in reply to Mrs. Ewbank's invitation."

Susan did not hear the reply, but it was with difficulty she restrained an exclamation of terror as one name reached her ears. She hastened homeward, murmuring to herself, "The world is small indeed. In these days, no corner is quiet enough to hide one. There is not space enough to bury the past in."

(To be continued.)

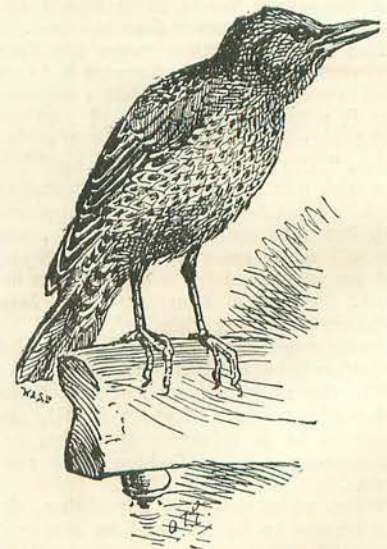
TALKING BIRDS.



THE JAY.

How many talking birds have we, then?" was the exclamation of a few friends one evening, our conversation having run upon singing birds and their powers of speaking. Well, I will tell you, having studied the subject a little. I should say about eight or nine possibly, who possess the ear and power of mimicry, and imitating the voice of other birds and sounds. But I have not known all these to have possessed the power of speech. I should say that gift was confined to about five, beginning of course with the parrot. Second to that bird is certainly the mynah, or mind-bird of India. I prefer his voice myself to the parrot. He is a pretty creature, his colour being a deep velvet black, with the exception of a white mark on the base of the quill feathers of the wing. The bill and legs are yellow, and from the eye to the back of the head are two wattles, of a bright yellow colour. Well, as I said before, I prefer his talking powers in preference to the well-known grey parrot. You may doubtless have noticed a certain hollowness about the voice of the parrot, which, to my mind, is not so perceptible in the mynah. Of course it always is so more or less with all birds, as that well-used instrument in the human body, the tongue, does not come into play with birds at

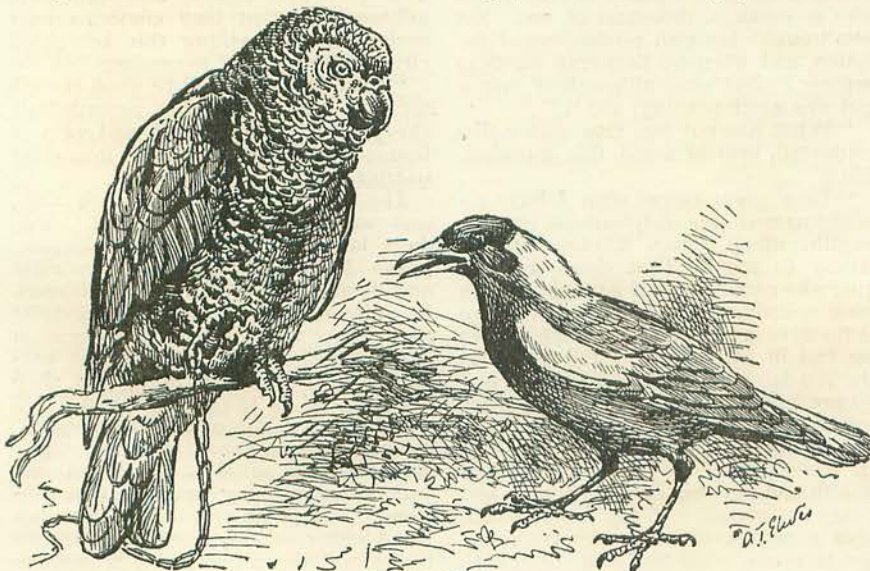
all, so naturalists say. The voice and formation of words no doubt come straight from the larynx, so the tongue takes no part in uttering sounds. The vocal organs of birds are attached to the termination of the trachea, or windpipe. There are four pairs, or eight muscles, attached to the windpipe in singing and talking birds, whereas in the stork there are none, showing and accounting for the entire absence of voice in that bird. There is a membranous tongue at the opening of the larynx, which no doubt helps to modulate and articulate words.



THE STARLING.

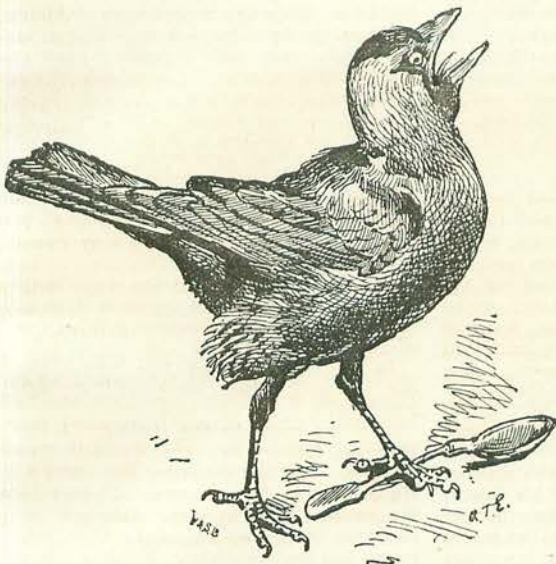
You may have read of ignorant people splitting the tongue of singing birds under the impression that it will give value to their notes; but I need scarcely say that it is a very cruel and useless practice, from which more often than not a bird dies. Carefully watch any talking birds, and you will then see that the voice comes from the throat,* although

* In fact, a ventriloquist cultivates his voice, and uses it in much the same way as a bird speaking straight from the larynx, using the tongue but little. What wonderful ventriloquists birds would make.

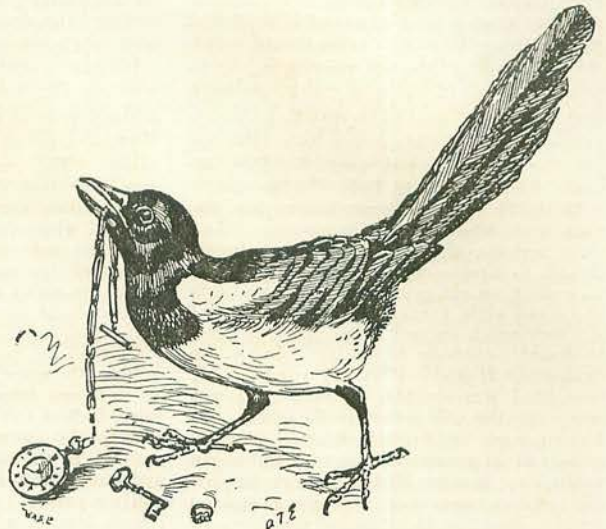


GREY PARROT.

PIPING CROW.



JACKDAW.

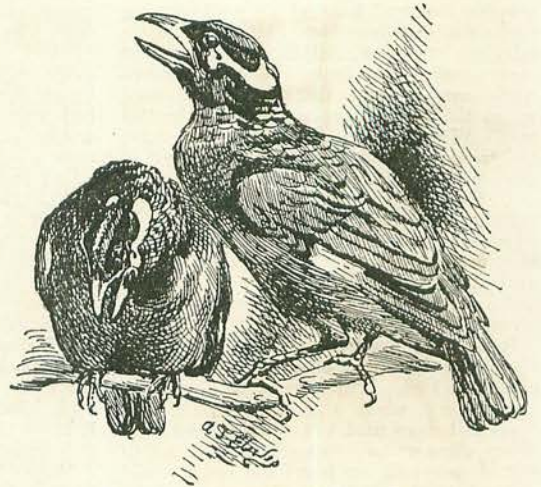


MAGPIE.

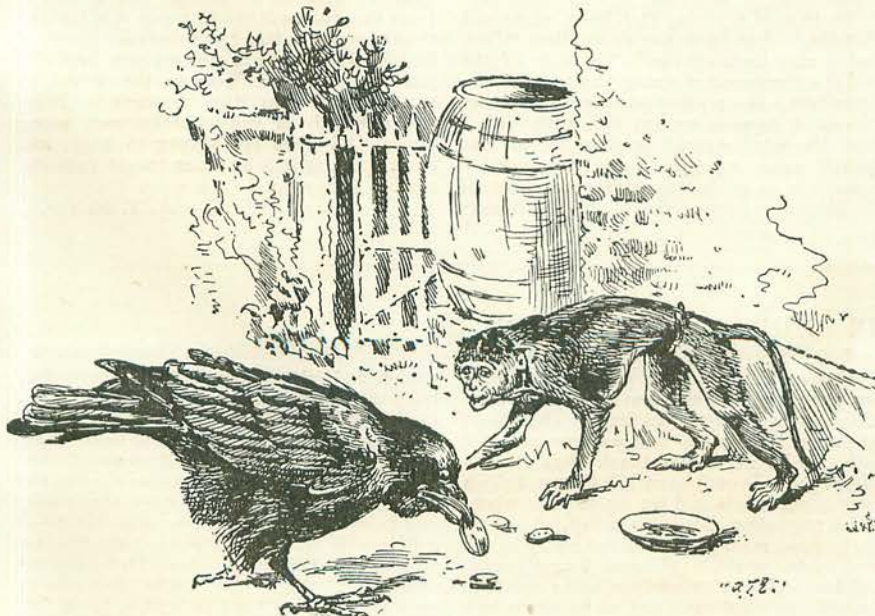
the Rev. J. G. Wood, in his *Feathered Friends*, says the construction of the bill and tongue and other corresponding organs of the parrot, is very curious, as it is that construction, together with its implanted imitative instinct, which enables it to give utterance to articulate sounds. The resonance of human sounds is produced by the hollow construction of the beak, and the thick fleshy tongue gives its aid in the formation of consonants. But naturalists say the tongue has nothing whatever to do with it, so at present we trust to their knowledge, as I think they have settled the question.

Many are the interesting anecdotes one naturally hears in conversation with those who take interest in our dear little feathered friends. But I should like to see our little birds better understood. People like them and pet them, but don't study them. I am often astonished at the ignorance of some folks with the advantages we have now in natural history literature. My esteemed friend Mr. Wolf, the well-known animal

painter, tells me it is not so in Germany. He says people there are much more enlightened regarding ornithological study, and even at the smallest cottage door you will see little boys teaching their bullfinches to pipe. I often have a delightful evening with Mr. Wolf, and many are the pleasant stories he has to tell. He possessed one little jackdaw who could imitate any sound that was repeated a few times within his hearing. For instance, when he got up from his easel to see to his fire in his stove, he had a habit of tapping his pipe upon it, to clear it before charging it again, when the echo of the sound was sure to come from some corner of the studio, where Master Jack would sit watching his master. Of course, jackdaw-like, he got into all sorts of mischief; but when taught young they



MYNAH BIRDS.



RAVEN AND MONKEY.

will learn a great deal, although they are not the best talkers of the crow tribe.

It has often struck me as odd that the power of speech should be confined to a few small birds, when Sally, the ape that used to charm us at the Zoological Society's Gardens, had been taught to count as far as ten by picking a desired number of straws from the bed she sat on, and could distinguish the difference between a little piece of apple and a big piece. When told to take the smaller, she could do so without a moment's hesitation. Why, that is clearly understanding. Yet not a word could she utter or be taught, although she appeared to learn anything else readily enough.

Now the little jackdaw, with all his impudent cleverness, has no such great reasoning power. The late Rev. J. G. Wood gives an instance of this in his *Anecdotes of Birds*. A jackdaw he was watching was carrying a long stick to his nest in the hollow of an oak tree. Well, he held it by his bill in the middle, but could not get it through, and he had not the sense to take it at one end and try again, but, after a number of ineffectual efforts, gave it up, quite exhausted, and went for another, perhaps with the same result, except by accident he might have been successful. So

we must accept things as they are, as it is intended no doubt for the best.

I have given a few sketches of birds that I have known—the two mynahs, one of which is unfortunately dead; but the one still living can be seen in the insect house at the Zoo any day, and he will afford a great deal of amusement to all those who would like to hear him. He will probably address you by "Who are you?" "What do you want?" "How are you?" "Good morning, Polly!" "Be quiet!" "All right!" etc. His words are quite distinct, and uttered quite humorously. And then, perhaps, if you should be unfortunate enough to have a cough, he will mimic you. I recollect an old gentleman once came into the house while I was there sketching, and I was very much amused to see his face when he heard somebody addressing him, as he thought—"Hallo! Who are you?" He thought I was speaking to him, as I was apparently the only person in the house. So I pointed out to him from whence the voice came, and he approached the cage and began to laugh at the comic birds, and they mimicked him; so for a moment or two it was a laughing match. And he told me he had never seen or heard the like—never knew any bird could talk but a parrot. So it is with many, who appear to go through life with their eyes and ears closed.

The sketch of raven and monkey illustrates an amusing incident I heard of a raven belonging to the Rajah Duleep Sing. He had a beautiful place at Eldon, Suffolk, where he kept many animals and birds. Well, this raven would worry a monkey that used to be chained up in the yard all the summer-time in this way. Whenever he got anything he thought the monkey would like, he used to put it down within an inch or two of his reach, then say, "Get it!" when Master Jacko would make an ineffectual effort to get at it and then retire. Master Raven would then put it an inch nearer, and say "Try again!" This kind of thing went on until they fell out, and had a regular fight, the poor monkey almost invariably getting the worst of it.

Ravens are excellent talkers. I heard a very good story the other day about this intelligent bird. It appears he had the run of a large park, where a number of rooks and crows and daws used to assemble round him. When there was a sufficiently large crowd to suit his purpose, our friend the raven would suddenly bawl, "Hallo!" The sound of the human voice among them naturally terrified these wary birds, and sent them off in every direction, to the complete gratification of the raven, who then had the field to himself.

I have made a little sketch of a mythical story I read some years ago which is worth recording of Apollo and the raven. In the olden days, when Apollo had entered into the first state of his perpetual youth, he chose his favourite bird. Jupiter, his father, took the

eagle; Minerva, his sister, took the owl; Juno, his stepmother, chose the peacock; Venus preferred the dove; he himself the raven. In those days the raven was one of the most beautiful of birds, for its plumage was as white as snow, its beak was rosy pink, its eyes were blue, and its voice surpassed the nightingale in melody.

There was on earth a grove sacred to Apollo. The trees were vines, and figs and roses stretched themselves up their trunks, and, bending over, formed an arbour, in the midst of which the fountain Helicon sparkled. It so fell out that Apollo thirsted for the waters of his own sacred fountain; so he called the raven to him, and, giving the bird his cup, bade him descend to the earth and bring him some of the cool water. The raven took the cup and sought the fountain.

Now, the raven was a very vain bird, and if he had been formerly proud of his looks and voice, he was ten times prouder since he had been the favourite of Apollo. So he stood at the edge of the fountain admiring his beauty, and then burst into song, extolling himself and his patron. Then he thought he would refresh himself with the fruit; but it was not quite ripe, and, after tasting several bunches of grapes and some figs, he determined to wait until the morning, when they might be ripened.

In fine, he idled away his time, until he remembered he had been absent for several days. So he filled the cup, and, seeing a brilliant serpent gliding in the grass, seized it in his beak and carried it with him. He came before Apollo, and made the excuse that he had found a serpent polluting the sacred waters, and that he had just vanquished it after a combat of seven days. But Apollo seized the lying bird and hurled him to the earth. He flew immediately to contemplate himself at the fountain; but the first glance revealed black plumage, and when he uttered an exclamation of horror, his voice had lost all its melody.

A very amusing bird in the aviary at the Zoological Gardens is the piping crow. The one I speak of has evidently been brought up in the poultry yard, for he imitates and mimics the fowls, and the crow of the old barn-door cock. But these birds do not appear to catch hold of the human voice so well, although they correctly imitate any sound.

Master Magpie, you see, is up to his usual tricks, always attracted by an irresistible desire to steal anything that looks bright and glittering. But he is also an excellent talker, and a very amusing bird. The title of the bird is a compound of "mag" and "pie," the latter being the primary name and the former added. I suppose we get the word "pie" from the word "pica," or from the ancient British name "piogen," and the syllable "mag" is as probably added on account of the chattering propensities of this individual;

for the word "mag" is used in many parts of England to signify an amusing talk; so that the whole word simply means "chattering pie," which, it must be admitted, is quite appropriate. Some people fancy that the bird is called a pie on account of its pied colour; but that is a question, as magpies were known long before colours were mixed. Shakespeare calls the bird a "magot-pie," from which magpie may possibly be derived. *Magot* in French signifies "monkey;" and as he is a very monkey among birds, it is a very appropriate name.

Master Jackdaw is running away with a spoon, which he does not appear at all anxious to give up. He only ejaculates, "What for?" when remonstrated with.

In the sketch of the two mynah birds, one is saying "How are you?" the other coughing.

Now we come to the starling. I think there are very few of our readers who know what powers this very pretty little bird has. He belongs to the crow tribe, of which he is the smallest resident here. They are great favourites with fanciers, and, when taken young, can learn anything. If taken from the nest, you can bring them up well on a little bread and milk and a few mealworms; and as to their ills, why, they have scarcely any, as the crow tribe do not have any of the ailments that singing birds usually suffer with. But of course for all such matters there are plenty of excellent books to refer to upon the management and treatment of cage birds. Naturally, my only object in this little sketch is to open up a subject which I have not seen treated before, and which must be of interest to many of my girl readers.

Our sketch represents Master Starling sitting on the back of his mistress's chair, evidently very much interested in the tea-table talk going on, and putting in a word or two to keep up the conversation when it flags a little, as I have often seen him do at my friend's house.

The grey parrot we must say something about, although of course he is a well-known talker, and many are the quaint stories told about him. He is represented as laying down the law to the piping crow. Mr. Crow, in reply, is simply crowing.

I could give you many interesting anecdotes concerning these birds, but space will not allow. What I want you, my good readers, to do, is, study these birds for yourselves, and I am sure they will amply repay you for any trouble you may take; and there are plenty of bird-fanciers who will procure you any bird you may want. Of course the mynah is more expensive as it is a native of India, and especially as you naturally want young birds. Old birds are slower to learn, and never speak so well as when taught from the nest.

A. T. ELWES.

"THE CHILD-HEART WITHIN US."

I THINK it was George MacDonald who spoke of the child-heart that lives on, after the sunny roseate days of childhood, in the heart of everyone of us human beings, even amid dark surroundings and through times of trial and trouble that bring tears to our eyes and sadness to our voices. Still the sweet child-heart is there, although we forget it, it may be, for awhile, and only wake to the fact that it exists when we feel some throb of gladness, such as when we gather the first primrose, or catch the spring song of the blackbird in the wood. Then the child-heart beats fast with happiness, and we know that it is still there,

true as ever! And when we see some pure tiny baby face, all fresh from the tender touch of the Great Creator, does not the child-heart go out in love to the wee wayfarer on life's path? Ah! we should thank God for the gift of youth—youth even in old age, hidden away in our hearts and yet smiling out whenever a responsive chord is touched. Look at the business man, grown old and weary in the ways of the world. He is no longer young, and his brow is furrowed with the indelible lines of care; but some day, as he passes by a stall in the city, his stern mouth relaxes, and his eyes grow soft for a moment as he sees

golden and white crocuses and blue violets lying there in the spring sunshine. He thinks of his little flower, gathered by the angels many many years ago—his little lovely child, with her sweet voice and steadfast eyes!

And then his thoughts wander away to the heaven that she loved to talk and sing about, and he wonders if he will ever meet her there. "Please God!" he whispers to himself, as he crosses the street to his office. It is only the child-heart within him, under the rugged exterior and the toil of this work-a-day world, but it makes his life brighter and more hopeful all the same!